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(54) **ELEVATED TOILET SEAT ASSEMBLY**

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A47K 13/02 (2006.01)
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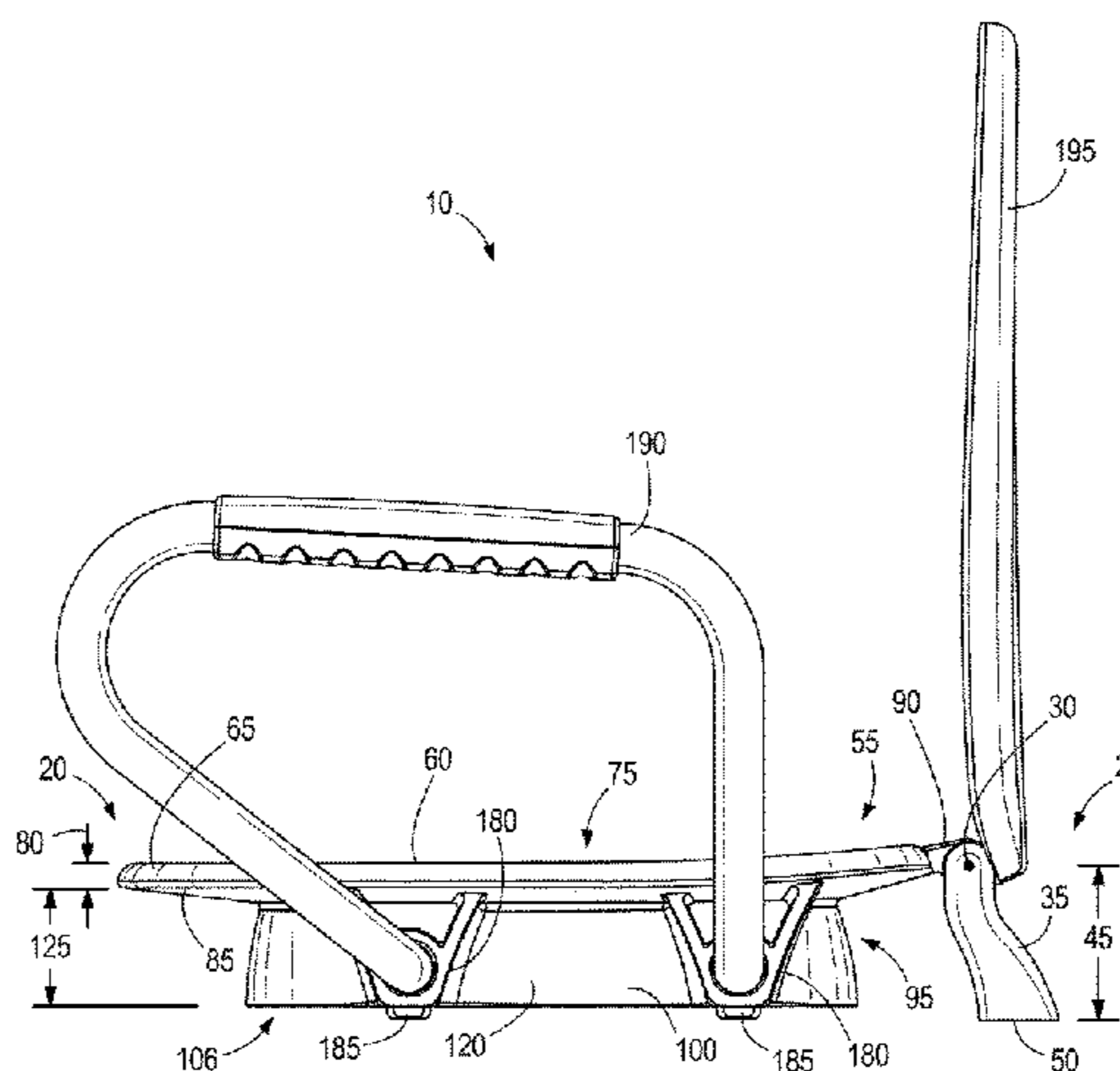
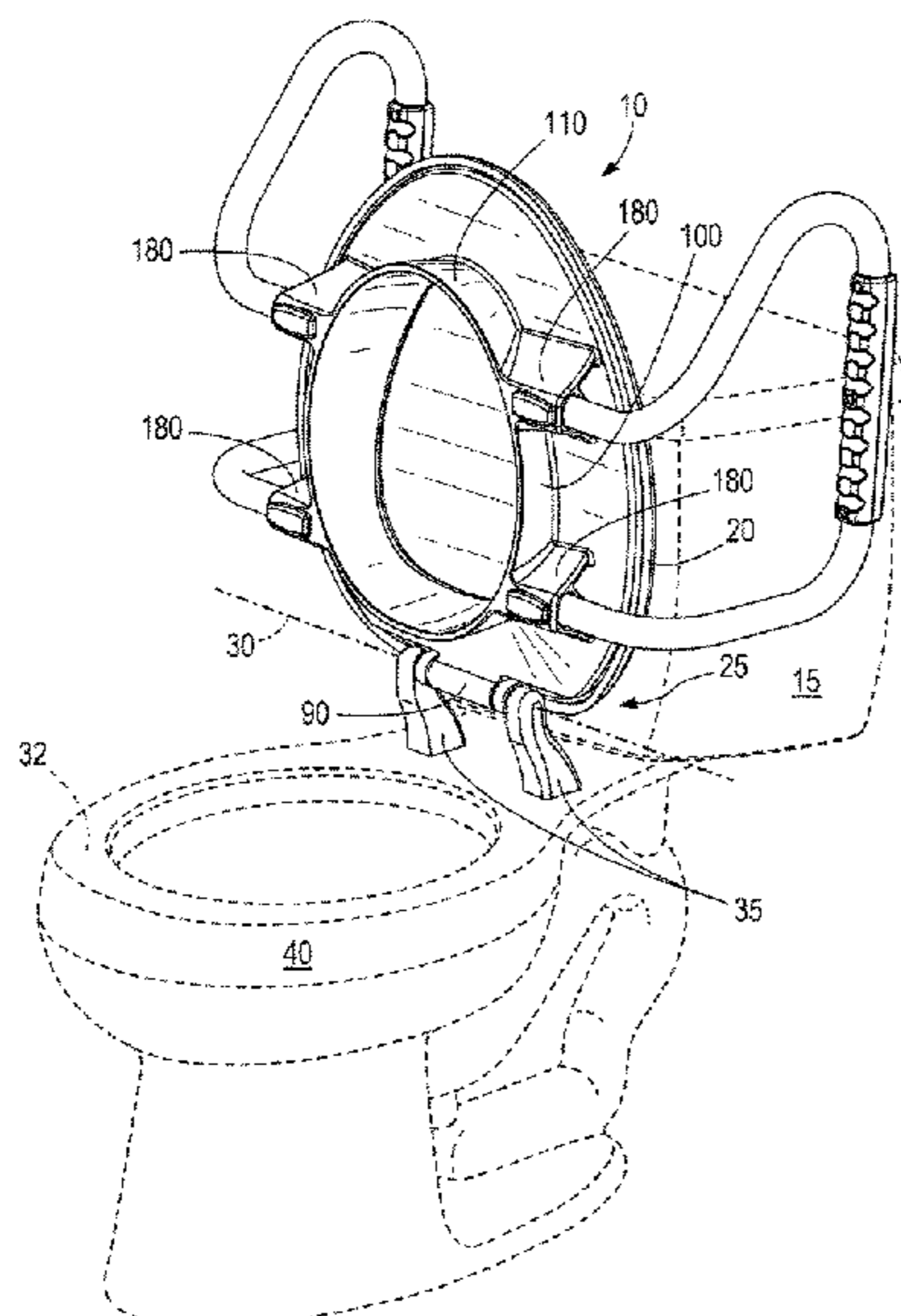
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

An elevated toilet seat assembly is for a toilet and includes a hinge post configured to be coupled to the toilet and a toilet seat pivotably coupled to the hinge post about an axis. The toilet seat is made from a single piece of injection molded plastic. The toilet seat includes a support surface configured to support a person on the toilet seat and a guard extending below the support surface. The guard is configured to block waste from splashing out of the toilet during use. The toilet seat also includes a plurality of supports extending outwardly from an outer surface of the guard. The plurality of supports is configured to engage a rim of the toilet to position the support surface at an elevated height above the rim.

17 Claims, 5 Drawing Sheets



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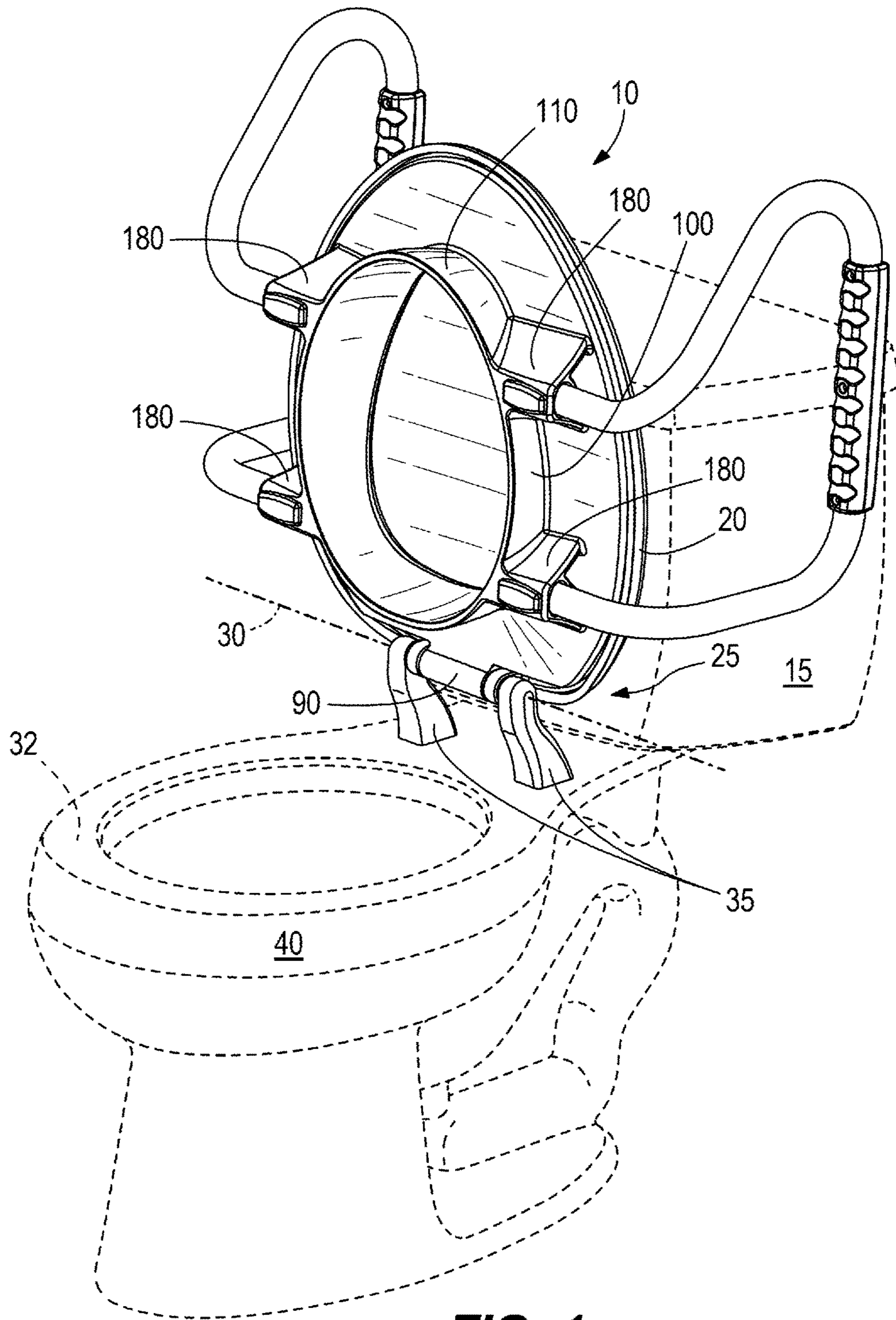


FIG. 1

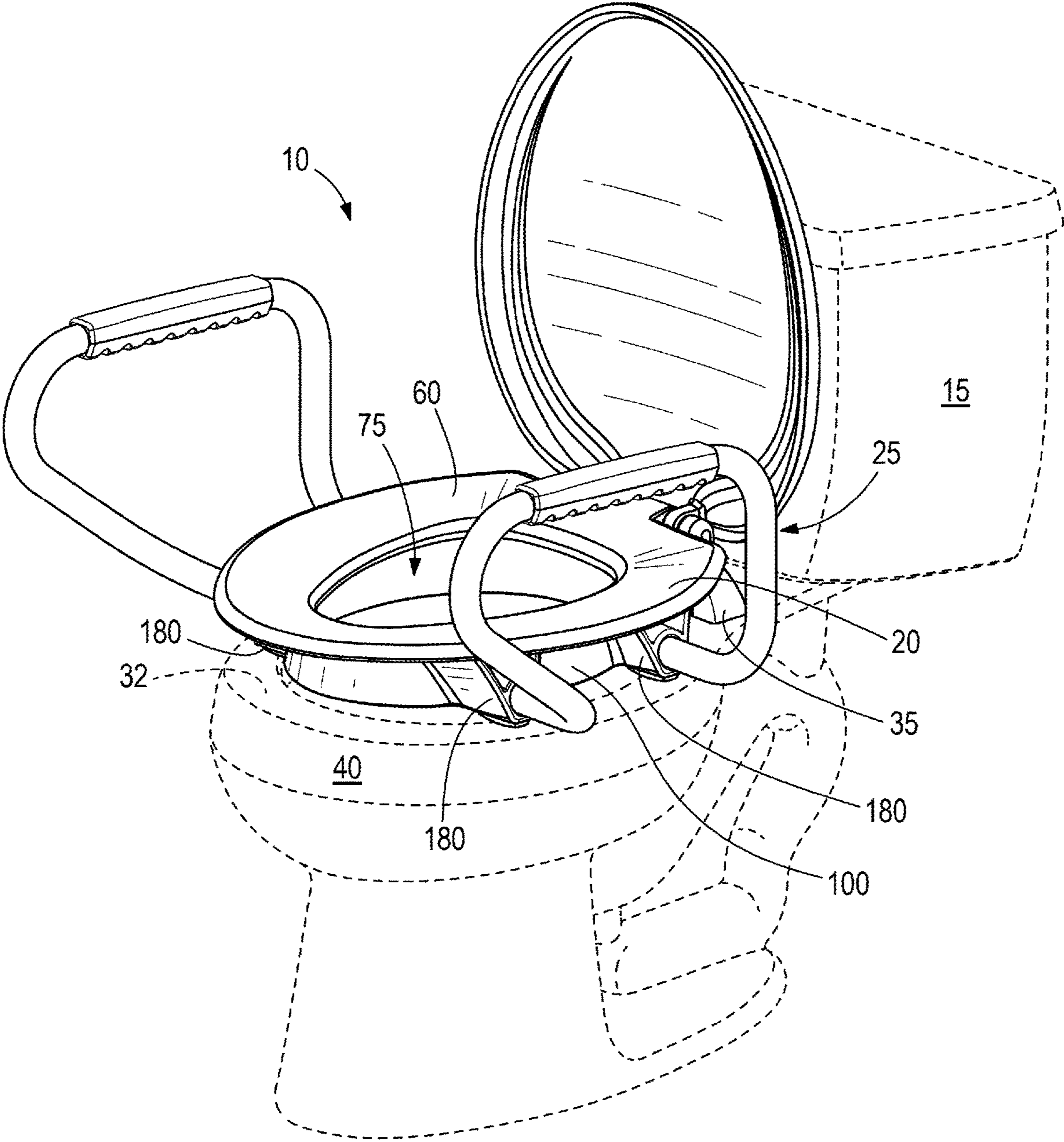


FIG. 2

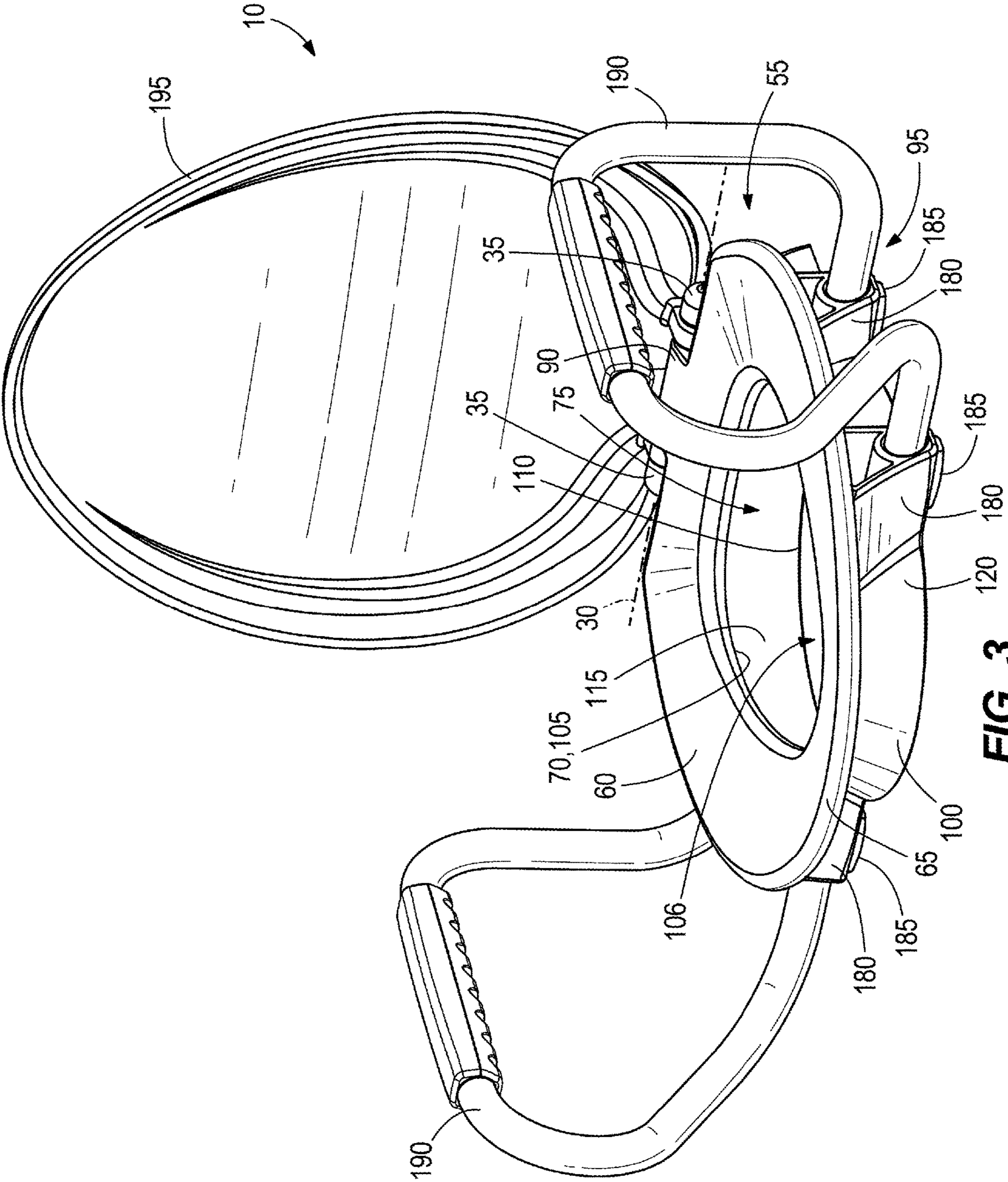


FIG. 3

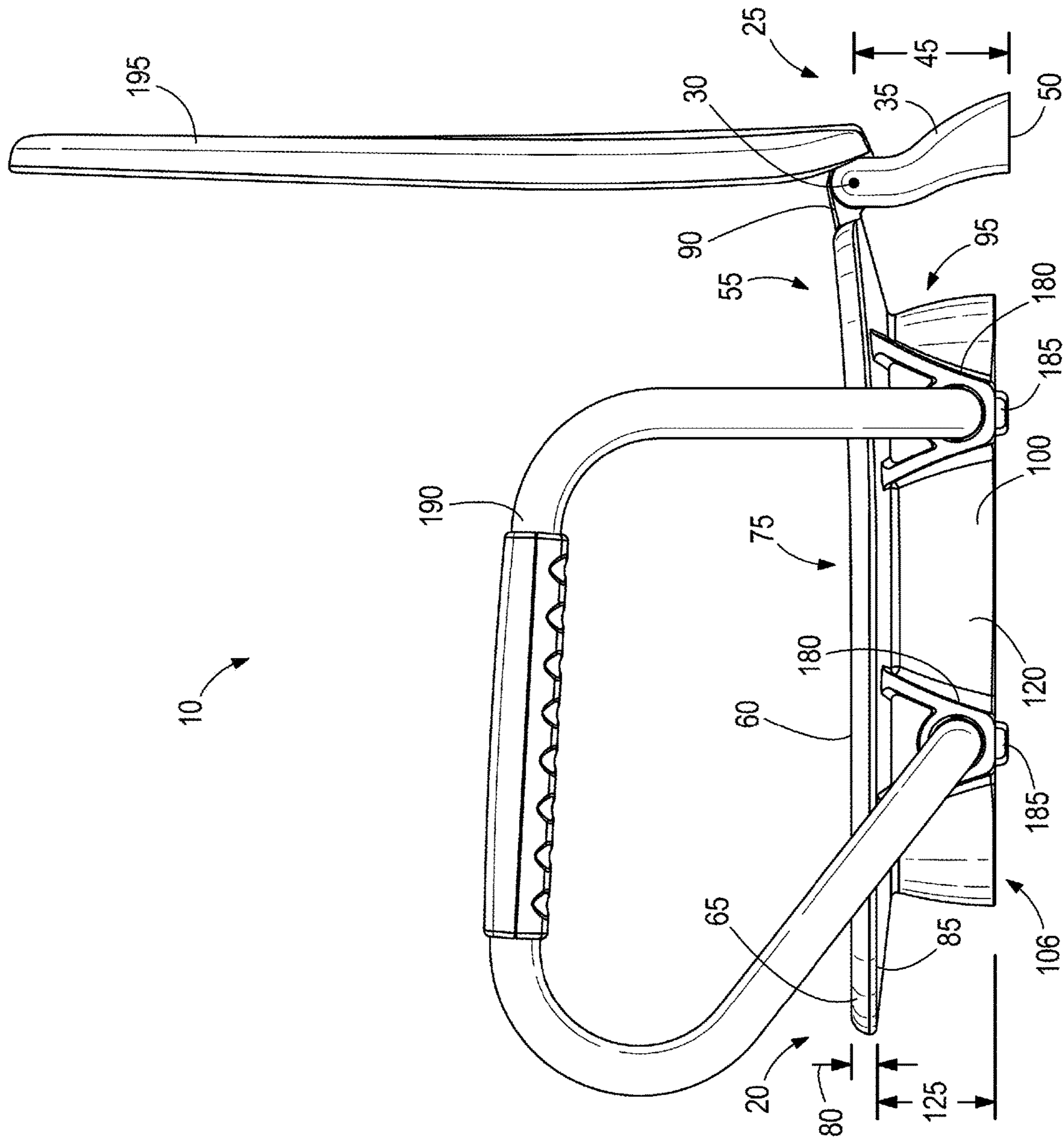


FIG. 4

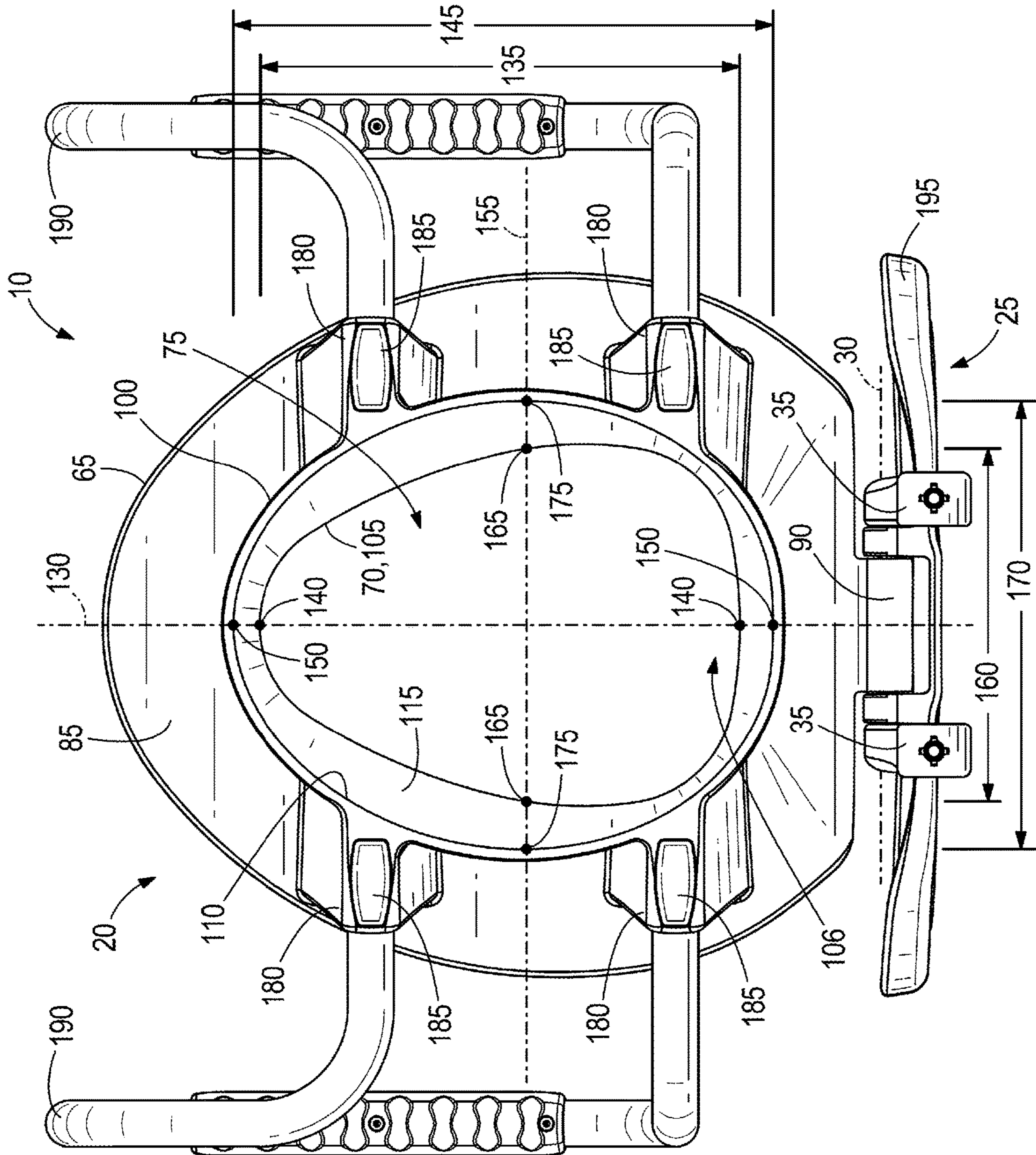


FIG. 5

1**ELEVATED TOILET SEAT ASSEMBLY****CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS**

This application claims priority to U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 62/729,196, filed Sep. 10, 2018, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to toilet seat assemblies, and more particularly to elevated toilet seat assemblies that assist in helping a person sit down on and stand up from a toilet.

SUMMARY

In one aspect, an elevated toilet seat assembly is for a toilet and includes a hinge post configured to be coupled to the toilet and a toilet seat pivotably coupled to the hinge post about an axis. The toilet seat is made from a single piece of injection molded plastic. The toilet seat includes a support surface configured to support a person on the toilet seat and a guard extending below the support surface. The guard is configured to block waste from splashing out of the toilet during use. The toilet seat also includes a plurality of supports extending outwardly from an outer surface of the guard. The plurality of supports is configured to position the support surface at an elevated height above the rim.

In another aspect, an elevated toilet seat assembly is for a toilet and includes a toilet seat configured to be pivotably coupled to the toilet about an axis. The toilet seat includes a support surface having an inner top edge defining a top opening of the toilet seat. The support surface is configured to support a person on the toilet seat. The elevated toilet seat assembly also includes a guard extending below the support surface. The guard has an inner bottom edge defining a bottom opening of the toilet seat. The guard is configured to block waste from splashing out of the toilet during use. The guard tapers from the inner bottom edge of the guard toward the inner top edge of the support surface.

In yet another aspect, an elevated toilet seat assembly is for a toilet and includes a toilet seat configured to be pivotably coupled to the toilet about an axis in at least an in-use position in which the toilet seat engages a rim surface of the toilet. The toilet seat includes a support surface having an inner top edge defining a top opening. The support surface is configured to support a person on the toilet seat. The elevated toilet seat assembly also includes a guard extending below the support surface. The guard has an inner bottom edge defining a bottom opening of the toilet seat. The guard is configured to block waste from splashing out of the toilet during use. A plane is configured to be perpendicular to the rim surface of the toilet and extends through the top and bottom openings when the toilet seat is in the in-use position. A first distance, measured within the plane between opposing points on the inner top edge, is less than a second distance, measured within the plane between opposing points on the inner bottom edge.

Other aspects of the invention will become apparent by consideration of the detailed description and accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an elevated toilet seat assembly according to an embodiment of the invention, the toilet seat assembly coupled to a toilet in a raised position.

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FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the elevated toilet seat assembly of FIG. 1 in a lowered position.

FIG. 3 is a perspective view of the elevated toilet seat assembly of FIG. 1.

FIG. 4 is a side view of the elevated toilet seat assembly of FIG. 3.

FIG. 5 is a bottom view of the elevated toilet seat assembly of FIG. 3.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Before any embodiments of the invention are explained in detail, it is to be understood that the invention is not limited in its application to the details of construction and the arrangement of components set forth in the following description or illustrated in the following drawings. The invention is capable of other embodiments and of being practiced or of being carried out in various ways. Also, it is to be understood that the phraseology and terminology used herein is for the purpose of description and should not be regarded as limiting. The use of “including,” “comprising,” or “having” and variations thereof herein is meant to encompass the items listed thereafter and equivalents thereof as well as additional items. Unless specified or limited otherwise, the terms “mounted,” “connected,” “supported,” and “coupled” and variations thereof are used broadly and encompass both direct and indirect mountings, connections, supports, and couplings. Further, “connected” and “coupled” are not restricted to physical or mechanical connections or couplings. Terms of degree, such as “substantially” or “approximately” are understood by those of ordinary skill to refer to reasonable ranges outside of the given value, for example, general tolerances associated with manufacturing, assembly, and use of the described embodiments.

FIGS. 1 and 2 illustrate an elevated toilet seat assembly 10 coupled to a toilet 15. The toilet seat assembly 10 includes a toilet seat 20 pivotably coupled to a hinge post 25 about an axis 30 between a first position (FIG. 1) and a second position (FIG. 2). The first position is a raised or upright position. The second position is a lowered or in-use position when the toilet seat 20 engages a rim surface 32 of the toilet 15. The hinge post 25 includes two post members 35 that are coupled to a base 40 of the toilet 15. The hinge post 25 can be fixed to the base 40 by fasteners or selectively coupled to the base 40 by a quick-disconnect feature. In other embodiments, the hinge post 25 can include one post member coupling the toilet seat 20 to the base 40. In the illustrated embodiment, a height 45 of the hinge post 25 (i.e., a distance between the axis 30 and a bottom surface 50 of the hinge post 25; FIG. 4) is between about 3 inches and about 5 inches. In some embodiments, the height 45 of the hinge post 25 is about 4 inches.

The illustrated toilet seat 20 is made of plastic. More particularly, the toilet seat 20 is injection molded as a single piece of solid plastic. As such, the below described features of the toilet seat 20 are formed in one injection molding process. With reference to FIGS. 3 and 4, the toilet seat 20 includes an upper portion 55 having a support surface 60 defined between an outer perimeter 65 and an inner perimeter 70 of the upper portion 55. The inner perimeter 70 is an inner seat edge of the upper portion 55 and defines a central or top opening 75 of the toilet seat 20. As best shown in FIG. 4, the upper portion 55 defines a maximum thickness 80 (e.g., a maximum height of the upper portion 55) between about 0.35 inches and about 0.85 inches. The maximum thickness 80 is measured from the support surface 60 to a

bottom surface **85** of the upper portion **55**. In other embodiments, the maximum thickness **80** of the upper portion **55** is about 0.6 inches. Furthermore, the upper portion **55** includes a protrusion **90** to couple with the hinge post **25** (FIGS. **4** and **5**).

The toilet seat **20** also includes a lower portion **95** extending from the bottom surface **85** of the upper portion **55** (FIG. **4**). The lower portion **95** includes a shield or guard **100** having an upper edge **105** (FIGS. **3** and **5**) defined by the inner perimeter **70** of the upper portion **55**, a lower edge or inner guard edge **110** opposite the upper edge **105** defining a bottom opening **106** of the toilet seat **20**, and an inner surface **115** and an outer surface **120** extending between the upper edge **105** and the lower edge **110**. The guard **100** defines a height **125** of about 2.12 inches to about 2.62 inches. In other embodiments, the height **125** is about 2.375 inches. The height **125** is measured from the upper edge **105** to the lower edge **110** of the guard **100**. As such, a ratio of the height **125** over the maximum thickness **80** of the upper portion **55** is between about 3 and about 6. In other embodiments, the ratio of the height **125** over the maximum thickness **80** of the upper portion **55** is about 4. The illustrated guard **100** tapers from the lower edge **110** to the upper edge **105**. With reference to FIG. **4**, the guard **100** includes a nonlinear taper (e.g., a curved taper) that gradually and continuously tapers from the lower edge **110** to the upper edge **105**. In other embodiments, the guard **100** can include a linear taper. In further embodiments, the guard **100** can be a stepped taper and/or include portions without any taper and other portions with angled tapers. In yet further embodiments, the guard **100** can include a discontinuous taper from the lower edge **110** to the upper edge **105**. In addition, the illustrated guard **100** continuously and completely surrounds the central opening **75** of the upper portion **55** (FIG. **5**), and the guard **100** does not extend outwardly beyond the outer perimeter **65** of the upper portion **55** (FIGS. **4** and **5**). For example, the lower edge **110** is positioned between the outer perimeter **65** and the inner perimeter **70** of the upper portion **55** as shown in FIG. **5**.

With continued reference to FIG. **5**, a longitudinal plane **130** (e.g., a first plane) is oriented perpendicular to the axis **30** and extends through the top opening **75** and the bottom opening **106** of the toilet seat **20**. As such, the longitudinal plane **130** is also oriented perpendicular to the rim surface **32** of the toilet **15** and extends through the top opening **75** and the bottom opening **106** when the toilet seat **20** is in the in-use position. FIG. **5** shows one position of the longitudinal plane **130** (e.g., extending centrally through the top and bottom openings **75**, **160**), but the longitudinal plane **130** can also be positioned differently (e.g., right or left of the longitudinal plane **130** as illustrated in FIG. **5**) as long as the longitudinal plane **130** is oriented perpendicular to the axis **30**. With continued reference to FIG. **5**, a first distance **135**, which is measured within the longitudinal plane **130** between opposing points **140** on the upper edge **105**, is less than a second distance **145**, which is measured within the longitudinal plane **130** between opposing points **150** on the lower edge **110**.

The guard **100** also includes a lateral plane **155** (e.g., a second plane; FIG. **5**) oriented parallel to the axis **30** and oriented perpendicular to the rim surface **32** of the toilet **15** when the toilet seat **20** is in the in-use position. The lateral plane **155** also extends through the top opening **75** and the bottom opening **106**. FIG. **5** shows one position of the lateral plane **155** (e.g., extending centrally through the top and bottom openings **75**, **160**), but the lateral plane **155** can also be positioned differently (e.g., above or below the lateral

plane **155** as illustrated in FIG. **5**) as long as the lateral plane **155** is oriented parallel to the axis **30** and perpendicular to the rim surface **32** when the toilet seat **20** is in the in-use position. With continued reference to FIG. **5**, a third distance **160**, which is measured within the lateral plane **155** between opposing points **165** on the upper edge **105**, is less than a fourth distance **170**, which is measured within the lateral plane **155** between opposing points **175** on the lower edge **110**. Stated another way, a maximum dimension of the upper edge **105** of the support surface **60** (e.g., a distance separating points **140**) is less than a maximum dimension of the lower edge **110** of the guard **100** (e.g., a distance separating points **150**). As such, in one embodiment, the maximum dimension of the upper edge **105** and the lower edge **110** can be measured perpendicular to the axis **30**. In other embodiments, the maximum dimension of the upper edge **105** and the lower edge **110** can be measured parallel to the axis **30** such that the maximum dimension of the upper edge **105** (e.g., a distance separating points **165**) is less than the maximum dimension of the lower edge **110** (e.g., a distance separating points **175**).

With reference to FIG. **5**, a plurality of supports **180** extend outwardly from the outer surface **120** of the guard **100** toward the outer perimeter **65** of the upper portion **55**. In other words, each support **180** extends from the outer surface **120** of the guard **100** substantially parallel to the axis **30**. In the illustrated embodiment, each support **180** extends along the entire height **125** of the guard **100** from the bottom surface **85** of the upper portion **55** to the lower edge **110** of the guard **100** (FIG. **4**). For example, the height **125** of the guard **100** is generally the same height of the supports **180**, which is greater than the maximum thickness **80** of the upper portion **55**. In other embodiments, at least one support **180** can extend a portion of the height **125** of the guard **100** (e.g., from a midway of the guard **100** to the lower edge **110**). The supports **180** are formed within the foot print area of the upper portion **55** (i.e., the supports **180** do not extend outwardly beyond the outer perimeter **65** of the support surface **60**). The illustrated supports **180** include two pairs of supports, with each pair positioned on opposite sides of the guard **100** and extending away from each other (FIG. **5**). In other embodiments, the supports **180** can include more or less than four supports and/or be arranged differently around the guard **100**. For example, the toilet seat **20** can include at least one support **180** that extends away/toward the protrusion **90** (extending transverse (e.g., non-parallel) to the axis **30**). In the illustrated embodiment, each support **180** includes a foot **185** positioned on one end of the support **180**. Each foot **185** extends below the lower edge **110** of the guard **100** (FIG. **4**). In other embodiments, each foot **185** can be a separate member (e.g., a rubber foot) from the toilet seat **20** that can be coupled to the end of each support **180**. In such embodiments, the feet **185** provide a softer contact surface that reduces the possibility of marring or noisily engaging the toilet **15** during use.

As shown in FIGS. **3-5**, the toilet seat assembly **10** also includes two support handles or arms **190** for a person to stabilize themselves sitting down on the toilet seat **20**, during use of the toilet seat **20**, and/or standing up from the toilet seat **20**. In particular, each arm **190** is tubular in construction and is fixed to a pair of supports **180**. In other embodiments, the arms **190** can be removably coupled to the toilet seat **20**. In some embodiments, the support handles **190** can be plastic injection molded with the toilet seat **20** as one component. In further embodiments, the toilet seat assembly **10** can omit the support handles **190**.

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The illustrated toilet seat assembly **10** also includes a lid **195** that is pivotably coupled to the hinge posts **25** and the protrusion **90** about the axis **30** to selectively cover the central opening **75** of the toilet seat **20**.

As the toilet seat **20** is moved from the upright position (FIG. 1) to the in-use position (FIG. 2), the feet **185** of the supports **180** engage the rim surface **32** of the toilet **15** to support the toilet seat **20** at an elevated height above the rim surface **32**. Accordingly, the bottom surface **85** of the upper portion **55** is positioned away from the rim surface **32** of the toilet **15** (e.g., the bottom surface **85** does not engage the rim surface **32**). In the illustrated embodiment, the support surface **60** of the toilet seat **20** is positioned between about 3 inches and about 5 inches above the rim surface **32** once the toilet seat **20** is in the in-use position. Accordingly, the elevated height of the support surface **60** assists in helping a person sit down on the support surface **60** or stand up from the support surface **60** before/after use. Furthermore, the guard **100** is operable to block waste from splashing out of the toilet **15** during use.

As best shown in FIG. 4, as the feet **185** extend beyond the lower edge **110** of the guard **100** to engage the rim surface **32** of the toilet **15**, the lower edge **110** is positioned above the rim surface **32** (e.g., the lower edge **110** does not extend below the rim surface **32** into the toilet **15**). In other embodiments, the feet **185** can be omitted so that the lower edge **110** of the guard **100** is positioned substantially level with the rim surface **32** when the supports **180** engage the rim surface **32**. Because the guard **100** does not extend into the toilet **15**, the toilet seat **20** is operably universal with many different types of toilets **15** (e.g., U.S. style round toilets, U.S. style elongated toilets, European style toilets, etc.).

Although the invention has been described in detail with reference to certain preferred embodiments, variations and modifications exist within the scope and spirit of one or more independent aspects of the invention as described. Various features and advantages of the invention are set forth in the following claims.

The invention claimed is:

1. An elevated toilet seat assembly for a toilet, the elevated toilet seat assembly comprising:

a hinge post configured to be engageably coupled to the toilet; and

a toilet seat coupled to the hinge post in at least an in-use position, the toilet seat made from a single piece of injection molded plastic, the toilet seat including:

a support surface including top edge defining a top opening of the toilet seat, the support surface configured to support a person on the toilet seat,

a guard extending below the support surface, the guard having a bottom edge defining a bottom opening of the toilet seat, the guard tapering from the bottom edge of the guard toward the top edge of the support surface, the guard configured to block waste from splashing out of the toilet during use, and

a plurality of supports extending outwardly from an outer surface of the guard, the plurality of supports configured to position the support surface at an elevated height above a rim of the toilet, the plurality of supports configured to position the guard relative to the rim of the toilet such that the bottom edge of the guard is positioned above the rim of the toilet when in the in-use position.

2. The elevated toilet seat assembly of claim **1**, wherein a first plane is configured to be perpendicular to the rim of the toilet and extends through the top and bottom openings

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when the toilet seat is in the in-use position, and wherein a first distance, measured within the first plane between opposing points on the top edge of the support surface, is less than a second distance, measured within the first plane between opposing points on the bottom edge of the guard.

3. The elevated toilet seat assembly of claim **2**, wherein the first plane is perpendicular to the axis.

4. The elevated toilet seat assembly of claim **3**, wherein a second plane is perpendicular to the first plane and extends through the top and bottom openings when the toilet seat is in the in-use position, and wherein a third distance, measured within the second plane between opposing points on the inner top edge of the support surface, is less than a fourth distance, measured within the second plane between opposing points on the bottom edge of the guard.

5. The elevated toilet seat assembly of claim **1**, wherein the plurality of supports includes a plurality of feet extending beyond the bottom edge of the guard in a direction away from the support surface, and wherein the plurality of feet is configured to directly engage the rim of the toilet.

6. The elevated toilet seat assembly of claim **1**, further comprising a plurality of support handles coupled to the plurality of supports, wherein the plurality of support handles is configured to be gripped by the person to assist the person in sitting down on the toilet seat or standing up from the toilet seat.

7. An elevated toilet seat assembly for a toilet, the elevated toilet seat assembly comprising:

a toilet seat configured to be pivotably coupled to the toilet about an axis, the toilet seat made from a single piece of injection molded plastic, the toilet seat including:

a support surface having an inner top edge defining a top opening of the toilet seat, the top opening having a first area defined by the inner top edge, the support surface configured to support a person on the toilet seat, and

a guard extending below the support surface, the guard having an inner bottom edge defining a bottom opening of the toilet seat, the bottom opening having a second area defined by the inner bottom edge, the guard configured to block waste from splashing out of the toilet during use,

wherein the guard tapers from the inner bottom edge of the guard toward the inner top edge of the support surface such that the first area of the top opening is less than the second area of the bottom opening.

8. The elevated toilet seat assembly of claim **7**, wherein the toilet seat includes a plurality of supports extending from the guard, wherein the plurality of supports is configured to position the support surface at an elevated height above a rim of the toilet.

9. The elevated toilet seat assembly of claim **8**, wherein the plurality of supports is configured to position the guard relative to the rim of the toilet such that no portion of the guard extends into the toilet.

10. The elevated toilet seat assembly of claim **9**, wherein the plurality of supports includes a plurality of feet configured to directly engage the rim of the toilet.

11. The elevated toilet seat assembly of claim **7**, further comprising a plurality of support handles coupled to the plurality of supports, wherein the plurality of support handles is configured to be gripped by the person to assist the person in sitting down on the toilet seat or standing up from the toilet seat.

12. The elevated toilet seat assembly of claim **7**, further comprising a hinge post configured to be engageably

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coupled to the toilet, wherein the inner bottom edge of the guard is configured to be positioned above a rim of the toilet when the toilet seat is in an in-use position relative to the toilet.

13. An elevated toilet seat assembly for a toilet, the elevated toilet seat assembly comprising:

a toilet seat configured to be pivotably coupled to the toilet about an axis in at least an in-use position in which the toilet seat engages a rim surface of the toilet, the toilet seat made from a single piece of injection molded plastic and including:

a support surface having an inner top edge defining a top opening, the support surface configured to support a person on the toilet seat, and

a guard extending below the support surface, the guard having an inner bottom edge defining a bottom opening of the toilet seat, the guard configured to block waste from splashing out of the toilet during use,

wherein a plane is configured to be perpendicular to the rim surface of the toilet and extends through the top and bottom openings when the toilet seat is in the in-use position, and wherein a first distance, measured within the plane between opposing points on the inner top

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edge, is less than a second distance, measured within the plane between opposing points on the inner bottom edge.

14. The elevated toilet seat assembly of claim **13**, wherein the plane is a first plane perpendicular to the axis.

15. The elevated toilet seat assembly of claim **14**, wherein a second plane is perpendicular to the first plane and extends through the top and bottom openings when the toilet seat is in the in-use position, and wherein a third distance, measured within the second plane between opposing points on the inner top edge of the support surface, is less than a fourth distance, measured within the second plane between opposing points on the inner bottom edge of the guard.

16. The elevated toilet seat assembly of claim **13**, wherein the toilet seat includes a plurality of supports extending from the guard, wherein the plurality of supports is configured to position the support surface at an elevated height above the rim surface of the toilet, and wherein the plurality of supports is configured to position the guard relative to the rim surface of the toilet such that no portion of the guard extends into the toilet.

17. The elevated toilet seat assembly of claim **16**, wherein the plurality of supports includes a plurality of feet configured to directly engage the rim surface of the toilet.

* * * * *

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

PATENT NO. : 11,324,363 B2
APPLICATION NO. : 16/561594
DATED : May 10, 2022
INVENTOR(S) : Brian Pomplun et al.

Page 1 of 1

It is certified that error appears in the above-identified patent and that said Letters Patent is hereby corrected as shown below:

In the Claims

Column 6, Line 7:

Replace the following: "the axis"

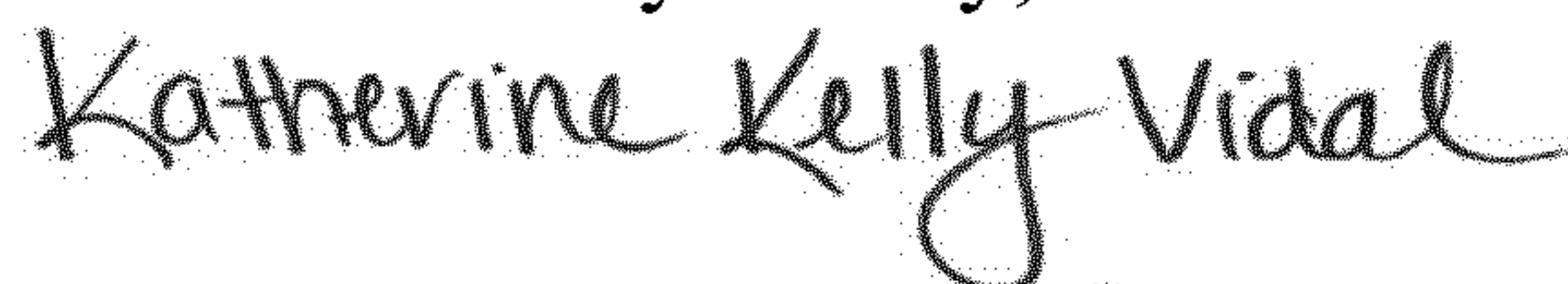
With the following: -- an axis of the hinge post --

Column 6, Line 60:

Replace the following: "claim 7"

With the following: -- claim 8 --

Signed and Sealed this
Ninth Day of July, 2024



Katherine Kelly Vidal
Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office